

Message Text

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73

ACTION AF-18

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

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R 240845Z MAY 74

FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2647

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

S E C R E T LUANDA 0367

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS AO

SUBJECT: MESTIZO LEADER WARNS OF MPLA TERROR

1. SUMMARY: CASTRO LOPO INCREASINGLY MENTIONED AS CANDIDATE OF MODERATE WHITES, BLACKS AND MESTIZOS AS GOVGEN ANGOLA, TELLS ME HE DOES NOT WANT JOB IF OFFERED, ESPECIALLY SINCE NETO HAS THREATENED TO ASSASSINATE HIM AND ANY OTHER ANGOLA ACCEPTING JOB WHO COULD RALLY POPULAR SUPPORT. MPLA INTENDS TO PROVOKE VIOLENCE BETWEEN WHITES AND BLACKS SINCE NETO'S ONLY HOPE OF EVER ACHIEVING POWER IS TO CREATE CONDITIONS OF CHAOS HERE. CASTRO LOPO SEES SOME KIND OF "DICTATORSHIP" AS ANGOLA'S INEVITABLE FATE WHEN INDEPENDENCE ACHIEVED; HOPES MULTI-RACIALISM CAN BE PRESERVED. ASKS THAT "TRUE NATURE" OF MPLA BE BROUGHT TO ATTENTION USG POLICY MAKERS IN CASE THEY UNDER ILLUSION US COULD HAVE NORMAL RELATIONS WITH NETO. END SUMMARY.

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2. JUDICIARY POLICE CHIEF JULIO CASTRO LOPO INCREASINGLY BEING

MENTIONED BY MEDIA AS CANDIDATE FOR GOVERNOR GENERAL OF MESTIZO, EDUCATED BLACK, AND WHITE MODERATES (LUANDA 342). HE CALLED ON ME MAY 23 TO ASK THAT FOLLOWING INFORMATION BE PASSED ON TO USG "POLICY MAKERS."

A. HE HAS NOT SOUGHT NOR DOES HE INTEND TO ACCEPT GOVGEN POSITION. HE IS NOT "POLITICAL;" AND CONSIDERS ANGOLA'S POLITICAL FUTURE TO BE SO UNCERTAIN AS TO WANT NOTHING DIRECTLY TO DO WITH POLITICAL PROCESS. HE RECOGNIZES HIS REFUSAL TO BE "USED" BY OLD REGIME HAS CREATED CURRENT EMBARRASSING SITUATION FOR HIM.

B. INDEPENDENCE IS CERTAIN; BUT THIS BEING AFRICA, SOME FORM OF DICTATORSHIP WILL BE UNAVOIDABLE. HE HOPES IT WILL BE MULTIRACIAL; BELIEVES 10,000 LOCAL MILITIAS PLUS 4,000 EX-KATANGA GENDARMES AND OTHER "SPECIAL FORCES" WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO KEEP LID ON AND STAVE OFF TROUBLE FROM ABROAD. FURTHERMORE, BOTH ZAIRE AND ZAMBIA WILL WANT TO PRESERVE MODERATE, STABLE ANGOLA.

C. HIS LACK OF INTEREST IN BEING NAMED GOVGEN RECEIVED ADDITIONAL BOOST MAY 22 WHEN HE LEARNED FROM RELATIVES IN MPLA (WHO TELEPHONED HIM FROM GABON) THAT AGOSTINHO NETO HAS MARKED HIM FOR ASSASSINATION IF HE ACCEPTS ANY SENIOR POLITICAL JOB. NETO IN FACT INTENDS TO PREVENT ANYONE FROM BEING DESIGNATED TO TOP JOB HERE WHO MIGHT THEREAFTER SERVE AS RALLYING POINT FOR BLACKS. THAT MEANS PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO APPOINT A WHITE AS GOVGEN.

D. NETO RECOGNIZES HIS ISOLATION, WEAKNESS AND LACK OF SUPPORT INSIDE ANGOLA, DOES NOT "DARE" TO RETURN TO ANGOLA BECAUSE BEING BASICALLY AFRICAN, HE FULLY REALIZES HE CANNOT RISK LOSING PRESTIGE ASSUMED (IF NOT ACQUIRED) DURING 14 YEARS AS PRESIDENT OF MPLA. THIS WOULD HAPPEN IF HE CAME BACK TO ANGOLA SIMPLY AS ONE OF MANY WOULD-BE POLITICAL LEADERS. NETO SEES NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO TRY TO CREATE CONDITIONS WHICH WOULD LEAD INITIALLY TO REMOVAL OF PORTUGUESE, FOLLOWED BY UNPOPULAR MINORITY RULE, AND EVENTUALLY POPULAR DEMAND FOR HIS RETURN. ADDITIONAL AIM OF NETO WILL BE TO PROVOKE VIOLENCE BETWEEN WHITE AND BLACK COMMUNITIES, TO SPEED UP PROCESS OF DISINTEGRATION. THESE ARE NOT EMPTY THREATS: NETO CAN COUNT ON LOYALTY OF HANDFUL OF LOCAL ADHERENTS TO CARRY OUT HIS
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INSTRUCTIONS.

E. IF CASTRO LOPO OR SIMILAR NON-BLACK IN SENIOR POLITICAL POSITION WERE ASSASSINATED, WHITES WOULD GO ON RAMPAGE. SEVERAL OF THOSE WHOM HE HAS DISCUSSED ASSASSINATION THREAT WITH (ALL WHITES - IN SECURITY POLICE AND GOVERNMENT) HAVE TOLD HIM THEY HAVE LISTS OF BLACK MPLA SUSPECTS WHOM THEY WOULD KILL IN RETALIATION. ARMY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO CONTROL SITUATION.

F. CASTRO LOPO CLAIMS HE IS NOT CURRENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL GROUP (BUT SAYS HE "CONTROLS" TWO DOZEN FORMER MPLA PROFESSIONALS, NOW IN WESTERN EUROPE). HE DECRIES NAIVETE OF WHITE LIBERALS (MDA) WHO THINK THEY CAN COEXIST WITH NETO. HE IS NOT TOO SANGUINE NEW COALITION OF BLACK PACIFISTS AND CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (SEPTTEL) WILL BE ABLE TO DEVELOP TOUGHNESS AND PRODUCE LEADERS CAPABLE OF GOVERNING ANGOLA WITH FIRM HAND. HE SAYS HE HAS REBUFFED THEIR INVITATION TO LEAD THEM.

G. AIM OF PASSING FOREGOING INFORMATION TO ME IS TO ALERT USG TO THE REAL NATURE OF MPLA, "IN CASE ANYONE IN WASHINGTON SHOULD THINK IT WOULD POSSIBLE TO WORK WITH NETO LATER ON."

3. COMMENT: I STRONGLY SUSPECT CASTRO LOPO MAY YET FIND HIMSELF BURDENED WITH LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY, FOR WANT OF ALTERNATIVES. MIN INTERTERRITORIAL AFFAIRS ALMEIDA SANTOS REPORTEDLY WILL INTERVIEW HIM ABOUT GOVGEN JOB WHEN HE VISITS HERE THIS WEEKEND. CASTRO LOPO DID NOT SAY FLATLY HE WOULD REJECT JOB; HIS CONCERN OVER ASSASSINATION THREAT, HOWEVER, APPEARS GENUINE.

4. THERE NO DOUBT CASTRO LOPO IS WELL INFORMED ABOUT MPLA. HE HELPED DRAFT MPLA'S ORIGINAL STATUTES, CLAIMS HE DREAMED UP "MOVEMENT" WHICH HE THOUGHT WOULD HAVE BROADER APPEAL THAN "PARTY." BROKE WITH NETO ALLEGEDLY OVER LATTER'S RADICALIZATION, CONVERSION TO COMMUNISM, AND ACCEPTANCE OF SOVIET HELP. IT IS UNCLEAR IN THIS CLOUDY CONTEXT WHAT CASTRO LOPO'S REAL MOTIVES MAY BE IN WARNING USG ABOUT NETO, WHO (WHATEVER CASTRO LOPO SAYS) HAS MORE PRESTIGE HERE AMONG INTELLIGENTSIA OF ALL COLORS THAN OTHER WOULD-BE NON-WHITE LEADERS COMBINED. FINALLY, CASTRO LOPO HAS, OF COURSE, ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BE "USED" IN ACCEPTING HIS CURRENT "NON-POLITICAL" JOB, EVEN THOUGH THERE IS NO QUESTION HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN ANGOLAN NATIONALIST AT HEART. HE MAY SIMPLY BE THE FIRST LOCAL POLITICAN TO BE PREPARING GROUND FOR EVENTUAL
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ATTEMPT TO SECURE US BACKING AGAINST OTHERS.
BRIGGS

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NNN

Message Attributes

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